

A
SERMON
Preach'd at the
F U N E R A L
O F
The Right Honourable
T H E
Lady *GUILFORD*,
Nov. 18. 1699.

By *John Knight*, D. D. Rector of *Broughton*,
in *Oxfordshire*.

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The Right Honorable

John A. Macdonald

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John A. Macdonald

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
Lord *GUILFORD.*

My Lord,

THE following Discourse is herewith humbly offered to your Lordship, in Obedience to Your Commands. And tho' I cannot doubt of its Acceptance there, where I have receiv'd so many Pledges of Respect; yet had I been left free, this should have been the last Thing I would have chosen, by which to express my Thankfulness, and my Duty.

The sad Solemnity being perform'd late in the Evening, I was obliged to drop several Paragraphs, that I had prepar'd to speak, which are here supplied in their proper Place.

As for the Defects which still remain, I can only ask Your Pardon, SIR, but cannot remedy 'em.

The DEDICATION.

*I had neither Skill nor Colours, to draw so bright
and Heavenly a Life ; the Piety and Devotion She
daily practis'd, gave Her such Perfections as were
easily Admir'd, but scarce possible to be describ'd.*

*And now, my Lord, if instead of votive Tables to
adorn Her Shrine, Your Lordship shall preserve Her
Memory, by imitating Her Example, You also shall
be kept by the Power of God, through Faith, unto
Salvation ; which is the Prayer of,*

Right Honourable,

Your Lordship's, in the Humblest

and most Dutiful Observance,

John Knight.

N U M B. XXIII.

Latter part of the 10th Verse.

*Let me dye the Death of the Righteous,
and let my last end be like his.*

WHICH Words are the Sober and Pious Wish of a very impious, and otherwise very profane Man; who, tho' out of a greedy Appetite after Gain, had sold himself to work a most desperate piece of Wick-edness, even to compass an Inchantment against *Jacob*, and thereby ruin *Israel*, God's only Heritage, by Magick and Sorcery; yet the Spirit of God so effectually over-ruled the Rage of the Prophet, and the Malice of his Familiar, that he could not curse nor defile, but altogether bless'd them.

The King of *Moab*, whose Drudgery *Balaam* was to do, built his Altars to *Baal*, the reigning Idol of that Age and Nation; at his Oracles the Prophet was to consult, and from them receive his Commission, to go and curse *Israel*. And after he had thus affronted God by sacrificing to the Devil,

Devil, he was, one would think, hopefully disposed, both to curse and to bewitch his People.

But observe the turn God gave to this wicked Enterprize, which will afford us equal matter of Comfort and Amazement; the Devil had the Sacrifice, but God gave the Answer, and the Oracle stood dumb, whilst the Angel of the Lord pronounced the devoted People Blessed.

Wherefore surely there can be no mischievous Divination against *Jacob*, when *Jacob's* God resolves to bless the Augury, and make the Magician his own Prophet. And what could *Balak* or Satan do to vex *Israel*, when their God proclaim'd Peace to them, from the very Altars of *Baal*; turning the Magick Circle into Holy Ground, and forcing that Tongue, of which the Devil had possession, to declare his Goodness and Loving-kindness to his People? For after many fruitless, tho' very desperate Attempts to curse that People, *Balaam* perceiv'd the Blessing was fatal, and the Decree of it irreversible, v. 20. insomuch that he saw cause to wish himself imbark'd in their Bottom, that their final Lot might be his own; *Let me dye the Death of the Righteous, &c.*

From which Words, and the Occasion of them, were it suitable to that Occasion on which we are now assembled, I could advance, and prosecute

several

several very grave, and important Observations ;
As,

1. *Obs.* That to be establish'd in the Divine Fa-
vour, as the Lord's Peculiar, is certainly the safest,
and most honourable Condition of Being, even in
this Life. For in this instance, under our present
Consideration, you see neither Men nor Devils
can annoy those whom God undertakes to vindi-
cate and uphold.

'Tis all impotent Malice that sets upon any Op-
position to them. However they are threatned,
or how desperately soever they are exposed, how
bold soever their Enemies may be ; tho' they shew
it first in defying God, which bespeaks the utmost,
even an hellish Rage ; yet so obstinate is the De-
fence, and so secure the Shelter which God's Peo-
ple have under his Protection, that the very Mes-
sengers of Satan, employ'd to buffet them, shall
find their Powers controul'd, their Artillery turn'd
upon themselves, and the Holy Spirit will cast out
Satan ; the mad Diviner shall revolt, and become
the Lord's Prophet, to pronounce that People
blessed, whom he took Fees to curse.

2. *Obs.* The prevailing Force and Evidence of
Divine Truths, which prophane or Atheistical Wits,
either question or deny : Those Articles, upon the
belief of which God has establisht his own Wor-
ship,

ship, and thence challenges our Reverence and Adoration, however they are exploded by the Lusts of Infidels, the Wit of Atheists, or the Malice of Devils, will one time or other be effectually prest home, to the Conviction of those that scoff at them.

For see here, how unlikely a Man was *Balaam* to say any thing in Honour of the true God, or to assert the peculiar Prerogative of his Providence in the Government of the World ; who was himself fallen into the grossest Idolatry, giving Divine Honours to the Devil, and in his Name, and by his Power attempting to bring the utmost Reproach upon the Name, and upon the Church of God. And yet you see the prophane Wretch could not peaceably dye in his Impiety ; tho' 'tis to be fear'd he did dye in it ; but renouncing his Magick, he betakes himself to his Prayers, and despising his own Idol ; when he consulted his own Happiness on that Occasion, he gave Glory to God, tho' he had so lately sold, and devoted himself to celebrate and establish the Worship of a damn'd Idol.

3. *Obs.* The commanding Influence, and awful Majesty there is in a virtuous and holy Life. Its avowed Enemies, in their sober moods, and if ever they reflect, do constantly commend its side. The King of *Moab's* Treasury, with all the Riches in it, *Balaam* thought too mean to purchase the Reputation

putation, or the Happiness that attends a Righteous and a good Man; nor now especially, when he took the prospect of Death and Judgment, could it calm the Tempest of his amaz'd Conscience.

To die the death of Kings, or Statesmen, was too stupid a wish even for such a Man as *Balaam*. And this, without that other Cognizance and Qualification, which Piety and Holiness, and Devotion to the true God gives a Man, is to dye wretched and contemptible, full of Horrors or void of sense: That is, a man must at the Apprehensions of his last End, look either like a Beast or a Devil, tho' he were a great Prince, and had acquir'd the Reputation of being never so wise or powerful, rich or learned.

4. *Obs.* From this early Instance of Heathenish Idolatry and Profaneness, we may observe, and bewail the desperate Degeneracy of the Age we live in; in that the very same Abomination should be set up and practis'd so commonly as they say it is among the inferiour sort of People, especially in such a Church, and such a Nation as this! That after Men have given up their Names to Christ, been initiated his Disciples by a solemn instituted Rite of his most Holy Religion; after they have made an open Renunciation of God's Enemies, and their own, and devoted themselves the entire

A Sermon at the Funeral of

Servants of God and Christ, and engaged themselves in a Covenant to live and dye so; a Covenant that establishes their Title to such blessed Priviledges, as the very Angels admire, and which were purchased for us at no les a Price than the Life of God! In a word, that after all the clear and gracious Declarations of God's Mind and Will in this Particular, so many poor Souls, whom Christ died to save, should revolt from the Captain of their Salvation, refuse their own Mercies, and undo themselves for ever, by running greedily after the Error of this very *Balaam*, for *Reward*, as St. *Jude* expresses it; this, I say, to any serious Man, must occasion but a Melancholick Entertainment. The People I mean, are those poor deluded Wretches, who fly to Wizards and Diviners, such as they call *Cunning Men*, for the redress of any providential Evil or Disaster, under which they suffer.

Now foreseeing that People of this Size would throng in, to make up the biggest part of this great Assembly, I was loath, upon so proper an Argument as I have in hand, and on so grave an Occasion as this, to slip the Advantage of dropping so serious and seasonable an Admonition.

These poor Creatures, it seems, in any manner of Distreis, very ordinarily, with *Saul* apply themselves

selves to Witches and Inchantments for Relief. And can there be a sadder Story told than this, that profest Christians should be given up to such a reprobate Sense, as to take the Devil for Familiar, and by the most damnable Apostacy, pay their Devotion there, where they have been taught to expect their everlasting Torments !

For to apply our selves to the use of such means as Charms and Inchantments, upon any occasion whatsoever, is an Atheistical Disclaimer of our Dependance upon God's Providence, and the most provoking Affront that can be offer'd to his Person.

Will it be said, (as I have heard it said in their Excuse,) that they use these means with an harmless intent, yea with a religious Trust in God, that he will bleſs them, to their Relief ?

But this is worse than to lye for God ; this is to pretend to own him, in an Instance wherein they do in Fact renounce him. This may be call'd the Religion of Atheism, for 'tis affronting God with Solemnity, and denying him with Devotion. Besides it is so ridiculous a Conceit, that the erecting an odd Figure, and a parcel of senseless Gibberish, should raise a sinking Pulse, repair the Decays of Nature, or bring back lost Goods, except it be by the Power of the Devil ; That God has in

Mercy left us, in this *Balaam's Story*, a demonstrative Argument, not only of the impious Profaneness of it, but of its stupid Folly, by opening the Mouth of a contemptible Ass, to rebuke the Madness of the great Magician.

And now let us behold him, as he stands thus suitably corrected, and we shall see this very Man in a much better mood ; and yielding himself up to be acted by a more powerful and purer Spirit, he becomes a Preacher of that very Faith, which he had so lately persecuted, even a Preacher of Righteousness and the Resurrection. I dare not be positive, that *Balaam*, tho' so eminent a Prophet, had an express Revelation made to him of this Doctrine ; for 'tis probable, if not certain, that many of the Prophets were made use of to predict such future Events, as they themselves did not perfectly and clearly apprehend. Tho', if it be as just an Observation as it seems to be a judicious one, which Monsieur *Alix* has made (in his Reflections on the four last Books of *Moses*, Cap. XI.) on *Balaam's Prophecy*, viz. That in it he makes a very distinct mention of the future Calling of the Gentiles to the Faith, *Numib.* 24. 17. (Now I say, if so) it may be as easie to allow him to have a Foresight and Belief of the Resurrection ; this being the great Article of that Faith to which the Gentiles

were

were call'd by the Servants of the Messiah, in their Preaching of the Gospel. But let that be as it will, 'tis certain *Balaam* had the knowledge and belief of a state of Immortality, and of future Rewards and Punishments; and so much has been generally acknowledg'd by the Learned Fathers and Doctors of the Christian Church, to be his Intention and meaning in these Words of my Text; it being the Foresight of this, that urged him to such a ~~mis~~Q., in crying out, *Let me dye, &c.* But farther, this is certain, if we may believe *Diogenes Laertius*, (*Lib. 1. de Vit. Philos.*) there were several of the Eastern Magi, among whom *Balaam* is generally reckon'd one, that taught this express Doctrine, that Men after Death should return back to Life, and be Immortal; and this he publishes to the World, upon the Authority of *Theopompus*, who was one of them, and who says in the Eighth of his *Philippics*, this Doctrine is *juxta Magorum Sententiam*; the same is supported by the Authorities of *Rhodius* and *Eudemus*. But tho' these Testimonies were rejected, yet in the subsequent Context, this Prophet, is by almost all that believe the Divine Revelations, understood to prophesie very clearly of Christ, and the Kingdom of the Messiah. He says of Christ that *he shall have the Dominion*, *Chap. 24. v. 19.* But we know that his.

Resur-

Resurrection was the first glorious Manifestation of his Royal Power, in his Conquest over Death and Hell. And in this state why might not *Balaam* behold him, especially after he knew the Knowledge of the most High, and had seen the Vision of the Almighty, upon which he declar'd, *I shall see him, but not now*, v. 17. But to dispute for the Prophet's meaning no longer, be it what it will, sure I am, that the last end of the Righteous cannot be by us understood, to mean any thing short of the Resurrection: For the Death of the righteous and the wicked, by the best Judgment we can make, is often so little preferable one to th' other, that there can be no sense in our wishing rather for that than this, unless upon the steady Conviction and Belief of their rising again to an Immortal Life.

And now I am come to treat of the Text, as in a ~~true~~, so in a sense very suitable to the sad Occasion, on which we are now met.

For what so proper to allay our Sorrows for the Death of our Friends, or to prompt us to all serious Preparations to follow them, as to be told, at their Interment, that the Body we commit to the Dust shall again be quicken'd, tho' it perish there; and tho' *sown in Dishonour*, yet not without hopes it shall be *rais'd in Glory*. Wherefore in

in pursuit of the utmost intention of the Words, the *Altior Sensus, & Mysticus*, as *Grotius* speaks, I shall hold my self accountable for this twofold Undertaking.

I. I shall shew the Doctrine of the Resurrection has not been only anciently and generally believ'd, but the Reason of it, which makes it necessary; and therefore not without absurdity to be denied.

II. The Article being prov'd, I shall shew for what singular Reasons the last end of the Righteous is incomparably most desirable; so that it will be our Wisdom not only to wish it may be our own, but also seriously to endeavour it.

I. As for the Doctrine of the Resurrection, we may the less wonder it has been so generally receiv'd, it being an Article of so vast moment to be believ'd, that *Theophylact* fears not to call it, $\tauὸν \piερὶ \lambdaλαῖον \tauὸν$ *καὶ μετέπειτα πιστεῖν*, the Capital Article of our Faith. And a greater than he says, If it be not true, *our Faith*, i. e. our Religion, is good for nothing; 'tis a Scheme of Vanity, *1 Cor. 15*. Nay St. *Paul* esteemed it so considerable, that, as if the whole of our Religion was contain'd in it, he calls it (v. 1. of that Chap.) *the Gospel*. Yea, we will absolve the whole Rabble of Deists, Atheists, Sceptics, and Apostates, from all their Blasphemy and Scurrility, and

and say with them, our Religion is an Imposture, and its holy Author a Cheat, if with any tolerable Sense, or shew of Reason, the Truth of it can be question'd.

Wherefore, to be as clear and quick as may be, in the dispatch of this Head, I will

1. Evince the Truth of our Saviour's Resurrection. And,

2. Then shew the necessary Connexion there is betwixt his and ours, *i. e.* Because he is risen, we shall also infallibly be rais'd from the dead.

1. My busines is to prove that Christ is risen. And if there had not been one Witness of it in the World, the Prophecies that foretold it would have been infinite Satisfaction to every Man, that had but Balaam's modesty to believe, that *God is not a Man that he should lie*, v. 19.

The Spirit of Prophecy is that undeniable Testimony to *Jesus* and his Resurrection, that to all Men that can believe the Truth or the Power of God, it is and has been always esteem'd beyond any sort of Proof or Evidence whatsoever.

So strong an Argument of the Event are all the Predictions of the Holy Ghost, that things are therefore said in Scripture to be done, because they are foretold. Were there then any Prophecies to this purpose, which Holy Men of old spoke, as they were

were moved by the Holy Ghost? This is so certain, that our Saviour ventur'd the whole Credit of the Fact, rather upon this, than upon any other Testimonies; insomuch that he told the *Jews*, if they did not believe *Moses*'s Writings, *neither would they believe, tho' one rose from the dead*. And this method of Proof he took to perswade his own Disciples: Tho' these Men had seen him often, and had converst with him, tho' they had eat and drank, walkt and discourtst with him, and were hereby in no manner of doubt concerning the Truth of his being risen, (except *Thomas*, for whose satisfaction he exposed his Wounds to be searcht and handled by him) yet notwithstanding all this, he urges what had been prophecy'd of his Resurrection, to give them the *greatest Assurance* of it, and confirms their Faith by a surer Evidence, for *then opened be their Understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures, saying, thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the Dead.* Luke 24. 45, 46.

The same Argument St. Peter, though he was himself an Eye-witnes, urged as the chiefest Evidence of the reality of the Miracle, and as the chiefest support of their Faith in it, 2 Pet. 1. 17, & seq. They were these Predictions that made him as well the Expectation as the Desire of all Ages.

Yea, it was after all so plainly foretold by our Saviour himself, and the Impression of his Prediction wrought with such Force upon the Minds of his Enemies, that his very Murderers did expect it; it being from hence they were prompted to guard his Tomb; which by the unsearchable Wisdom of God was the occasion to these Wretches, of such further Evidence, that they were at Charges to stifle what they therefore wanted the Impudence to deny: For next to the Angels, the Guards that were hired to keep him Prisoner in the Grave, were some of the first Evangelists to publish the Truth of his Resurrection, *Mat. 28. 11.* So that upon their Report, the Chief Priests and Elders were confirm'd in their Belief on't.

And how impossible must it have been for those Infidels to hold out in the real Disbelief of it, when they had observ'd the ancient Prophecies were verified in him, with respect to some of the minutest Circumstances and Transactions of his Life; yea when they had seen several Persons, whom they had known truly dead, were restored to Life by him; and one particularly, *Lazarus* by Name, not only dead but rotten.

Now was it likely, or could they imagine, that he that had given such Evidence of his Almighty Power, and so openly display'd his Conquests over

ver the Grave, was liable himself to be held Captive by the Enemy he had vanquish'd?

Upon the whole then, if Christ, as you have heard, laid the greatest weight upon, and chiefly appeal'd unto the ancient Prophecies that foretold his Resurrection, our modern Atheists and Infidels have nothing to do, but to examin whether there are any Prophecies extant of such a Date. And if they find any such, they must in spight of their Teeth confess, that the Accomplishment of them is an immovable Testimony to the Foreknowledge and Wisdom, to the infinite Power and Truth of God.

Again, that what was thus prophecy'd of Christ, and particularly of his Resurrection, has accordingly been fulfill'd. This God himself has born such indeniable Witness unto, *both with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will*, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 2. 4.* that the Infidel has not the least colour of Pretence to dispute its Evidence. Insomuch that his Wit and Malice is quite exhausted upon the Argument. And except we will admit of Scoffs for Objections, and Grimaces for Confutations, the poor Atheist and his Cause are ruin'd; for whatever Reasons he brings to weaken or subvert the Credit of this Doctrine, or of them that have testify'd to the Truth of it, will equally affect his own Credit, tho' what he

affirms be really never so true, and tho' it were infinitely his Interest that it obtain'd Belief.

Wherefore all that I shall here further add upon this Argument is, That upon the Credit of those Prophecies that foretold the Resurrection, and those Eye-witnesses that saw Christ risen, it was generally believed by almost all Nations, and all sorts of men; by the Patriarchs and *Magi*, by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by Philosophers of all Sects, yea by *Judas* that betrayed him, by the Judges that condemned him, and by the Executioner that dispatch'd him; for when he, the *Centurion*, i. e. the Heathen Officer who had the care of his Execution, *saw what was done, he fear'd greatly*, saying, *Truly this was the Son of God.* Matt. 27. 54. For he that was seen and felt to exercise such a power, that put the Earth into Convulsions whilst he was dying upon the Cros, left no room in any Infidel to doubt after that, but he could also rend the Prison of the Grave, as he did by a second Earth-quake at his powerful Resurrection.

Thus did he, that suffer'd for our Sins, to shew the efficacy of that Attонement, rise again for the Justification both of it and us; which makes our assurance of our Resurrection equal to that of his; and that if we believe he is risen, with the same

same certainty are we to believe that we shall : For if there be no Resurrection of the Dead, then neither is Christ risen, as St. Paul argues 1 Cor. 15. Which brings me to my second Particular to be prov'd, viz. The necessary Connexion between his and ours.

Christ is the head of that Body, of which we are said to be members, and by his Resurrection he hath begotten us to a lively hope of our own ; for if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you ; he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. 8. 11. So that if Death had no more power over him, who took upon him to expiate for our Sins, which brought the punishment of Death upon us, (for Death was the consequent of our sinning, not the fate of our Nature) it must needs follow, that it can have no more power over us ; otherwise our Punishment would remain after our Guilt is taken off, which cannot be said, without robbing God of the Attribute of his Justice, as well as Christ of the Merits of his Cross. Wherefore as by the first Adam came Death, by the second came also the Resurrection of the Dead.

In short, as I have above prov'd, that the most undoubted Argument of Christ's Resurrection, were

were the Prophecies that foretold it ; so have we the like assurance from the Declarations of God's Will concerning ours too : And if there be no doubt of God's Power, but that he is *able*, there can be none of his purpose in this matter, since he has aslur'd us, that he *will* ; and therefore we have now nothing to do, but to believe it *necessary*. Wherefore *marvel not at this, for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the Grave shall hear his voice, and come forth ; they that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* John 5. 28, 29. We may have leave, and 'tis indeed our duty, to admire and adore the grace and efficacy of such an Operation, but 'tis unpardonable to wonder so, as to suspect the certainty. We may devoutly admire, that Bodies so frail as ours should become subjects of Immortality : And to hear how the Almighty Potter designs to form such lumps of Clay into everlasting Vessels of honour, is, one would think, enough to perswade us in the mean time, to reverence our Bodies more, than to defile them by sensuality, to oppress them by Intemperance, and ruine them for a Lust. *Once more, It justly may and ought to raise our wonder and devotion both, to be told, That 'tis by his Power and Goodness we shall be rescued*

rescued from the Grave, who was himself by our inhumane Malice sent thither. Is he to come and fetch us from the Grave, who comes with Garments dyed in his own Blood, and so brings with him the Remembrances of our Cruelty? It is so; and therefore, as I said, tho' we are forbid to marvel so as to distrust the faithfulness of his Promise, or the omnipotence of his Power, yet not to be affected with all astonishment and devotion at the consideration of it, might be esteemed another Miracle.

And thus have I endeavoured, with competent satisfaction I hope, the discharge of my first task, *viz.* the proof of this great Article of our Faith; tho' considering there are still some Atheistical Gainsayers, that except against the Article and the Proof of it, I must be obliged to pay some deference to them, especially since they distinguish themselves by their Numbers, and by their Wit, by their polite Manners, and politer Learning: Nay they say these Heathens boast the Reverse of *Tertullian's Apology* for the Christians, and tell us, that they fill our Courts, our Camps, and our chiefest Cities; But what occasion soever there is for so impudent a Vapour, let those that are most concerned in the reproach on't look to't; mean while I return to what these Gentlemen except against.

And,

And, 1. They tell us, that this Doctrine was never generally receiv'd, but men of the acuteſt wit and deepest judgment always opposed it, and even as early as it was publickly attempted to be imposed upon their credulity. Among the *Greeks*, the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks* derided it; and among the *Jews* the *Saducees* obſtinateſly denied it, as appears *1 Cor. 15.* and *Acts 17. 18.*

Ans. True this is, and let our Infidels make the most on't: And after all it will appear, that they were but *ſome* among the *Corinthians*, i. e. *ſome* odd inconsiderable Folk; a despicable Sect among the *Jews*, but of late date, and ſhort continuance, whom the Learned Historian, of their own Age and Nation, describes as very contemptible for their Numbers and their Manners. So also in the other Instance, they were not all the Schools of *Athens*, but *certain* of the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks*; as if not all these neither. But whoever reads *Epicurus* their Master's Epiftle to *Herodotus*, [apud *Diog. Laert.*] will not wonder his Scholars and Successors ſhould affirm any thing absurdly, or deny what may be evidently prov'd true; ſince he there asserts the Infinity of Bodies, and calls it Dotage to assert the Soul incorporeal; which *Pythagoras*, a greater than he, and his Predeceſſor in the ſame School, very rationally affirm'd. So that these Exceptions rather confirm

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the Doctrine, than make any valuable Objection against it.

And indeed of extraordinary use they prov'd in his Almighty Hand, who can bring Light out of Darkness; for it was thro' the senseless Incredulity and Pertness of these few Men, that the Arguments were multiply'd in defence of the Doctrine, 'till it became establisht so, as to be impossible to shake it.

For tho' the *Corinthians* Infidelity was occasion'd by a foolish Enquiry into the manner how the dead were rais'd? And with what Body do they come? Yet the acute Argument the Apostle brought to satisfie those Fools, and to solve the mysterious *Phænomenon* so far, as to take off all pretence of Absurdity, in affirming it of the same Body, is infinitely more rational than their strongest Exceptions. For he illustrates it by Grain, which he says is not quicken'd except it dye; and by dying it is quicken'd, even the very *same* Grain. For 'tis generally now acknowledg'd, that the Seeds of Plants do contain every individual part of the entire Bodies *in parvo*, which spring from them, and that the Generation of more Seed, is nothing else but the Nutrition or Augmentation of the parts of the very same Seed.

And for this reason, the Apostle speaking of

Seed-corn, uses such Words as are proper to our Bodies, that they dye, and are quicken'd ; and of our Bodies he speaks in a Stile more proper unto Seeds, that they are *sown* ; to shew, says *Theophil.* the parallel Identity in the Resurrection of Both. And after this curious Solution of the difficulty, as a Philosophical Enquiry, he would not indulge these Men in the least Thought, as if there were not ineffable Mystery in the Resurrection, for he tells them 'tis a Mystery, but he has shew'd it not unreasonable ; but a Mystery it must remain after all that can be said, since *this corruptible puts on Immortality, and this mortal Immortality.* And this St. Paul, after he had been rapt up into Heaven, could neither express nor explain, but tells us, *it cannot be understood, nor can it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive.*

I hasten now to take notice of one Objection, which the Adversary brings, directly to confront my chiefest Argument, by which I would establish the Article of the Resurrection, which was by the Authority of the sacred Canon, and the Prophecies of inspir'd Pen-men.

Obj. And 'tis objected, upon the Authority of the wisest of Men, that *that which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth Beasts ; as the one dyes, so dyes the other ; yea, they have all one Breath, so that a Man hath no pre-eminence*

eminence above a Beast, Eccles. 3. 19. And upon the Authority of *David*, a Man as eminent for Piety, as *Solomon* his Son for Wisdom, we are assur'd the Article is plainly given up, for he in his very Devotions to his God (and sure he was in earnest then) says, that after Death he was to *be no more*, Ps. 39. 13.

Ans. Now whatever real weight there is in this Objection, 'tis certain, they that offer it lay none upon it, but despise it. For the Deists, whose it is, (we must no more call them Atheists, because they profess to believe a God) tho' they own the Being of a God, yet desire to be excus'd the believing any thing he says. And therefore you must know, when they read the Scriptures, 'tis only to learn how to make Speeches in their Disgrace, and blaspheme God in the Words of his own Mouth. However somewhat must be said to it, and since the reconciling any one of these Texts, will take off the force of both, I shall therefore attempt it upon the last, as that which in its sound, and form of the Expression, does more literally and directly import a denial of Man's Immortality, and consequently of his Resurrection.

But the most ignorant will easily perceive this could not be *David's* Meaning, that after Death he was to *be no more*, when they are shew'd the scope of his Prayer; for tho' he was an extraordinary

nary Man, and had labour'd hard to recover the Favour of God, which by his former Sins he had so desperately hazarded, yet he knew it was so infinite an Interest he had to secure, that he could never do too much for't ; and now being apprehensive his Life was in danger by the Violence of his prosperous Enemies, as well as by the frailty of his Constitution, he earnestly pray'd that God would please some way or other to discover to him the Period of his Days, that he might make suitable Preparations for such a change ; and since after this Life is finisht, all our holy Travels are so too, and nothing can be done for Heaven on the other side the Grave ; he begs for a little more time and strenght, that he might do God more, and more acceptable Service, before he *went hence*, and should do no more. And this was evidently the direct Meaning and Scope of his Supplication. For that this wise and great King should desire further to spin out this weary Life, which he had so long experimented to be so full of Sorrows, and more, that he should pray for more time to spend in Holy Mortifications, and the Labours of Religion ; in recommending himself to the Divine Favour, by more signal Acts of Faith and Patience, of Obedience and Submission, and yet expect that after Death he was to be no more ; this is so unlikely, that 'tis hard to charge

charge him with any thing more absurd. For the Labours of Religion are many of them so contrary to the ease and happiness of *this* Life, that 'tis impossible to attempt them, but upon the strongest assurances and expectations of *another*.

Indeed, if *David* had only aimed at the enlarging of his Conquests, or design'd to pass his days in ease and sloth, had he intended to make his Life a Scene of costly Pleasures, and to have distinguished himself by an indulgence to mighty Lusts, sacrificing the Blood and Purse of his subjects to his excessive Riots, there had been some sense in desiring a long Life, and a brisker health, upon the supposition, that after Death he was to be no more; but since he prayed for more Strength, only to Minister to his more vigorous Devotions, and to enable him to sustain the painful Travels of Repentance, and a severe Virtue; 'tis certain he proceeded herein upon the full persuasion and hopes of a better Life. But enough of this; for the literal meaning of the words without doubt is embraced at any time by these men, as agreeable rather to their lustful wishes, than to the sober Sentiments of their minds. I say the *sober Sentiments* of their Minds: For even these men I must believe are seldom so far hardened and debauch'd, but that they have their Intervals

tervals of Recollection, and in this season to my knowledge, whatever is the occasion, they will frankly profess, they would willingly exchange their hopes for their fears, and they would give up their expectancies of any *Inheritance* among the *Saints*, if they could but be assured, they should have their *Portion* among *Dogs*. i. e. They would not care for the *Felicities*, provided they could escape the Immortal *Miseries* of the other Life.

Now these misgiving thoughts are strong presages even to themselves, that after Death they shall not cease to be. But this vile Epicure that cries, *let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die*, is embolden'd to make such a profession over his Wine only, and whilst he is enslav'd to the Pleasures of the Palate; tho' when that Beast is disciplin'd into a distaste of his luscious Entertainments, and is made by adversity to *consider*, that his Life is more than Food, and his Belly infinitely less and inferiour to his God, he will scarce fail then, if not to believe, yet to fear and tremble at the apprehensions of another Life. 'Tis a prodigious Atheist, that can hold out for ever remorseless and unshaken: Tho' they say these men have their Dypticks too, in which there are enroll'd all the famous instances of unrelenting Atheists, which are carefully Preserv'd to encourage the weak, and to inspirit those that are

are in Danger, by the infinite arts and methods of the Holy Ghost's operating upon their Souls, to revolt back to God: And considering the Power of God's wrath, we can't well question, but these Sinners against their Souls, may be delivered up to so Reprobate a sense. But however, if these wretches have ever any Workings of mind, any Snubs of Conscience, any Spiritual Terrors, any waking Frights, or Ghastly Dreams like other men, these having often no manner of Relation to, nor dependance upon the Body, are insuperable convictions, that the Soul is an Immortal Being, and that as it can act thus independantly upon the Body, so 'tis the extreamest absurdity to believe it shall die with it.

But whatever such Scoffers may believe concerning the Soul's Immortality, or the Body's Resurrection, sure I am, the Persons concern'd in this Solemnity must in all good sense be granted to believe it. These expensive Funerals bespeak our Faith, that *this dead Body* shall arise. For it was smartly urged by *Tertullian* against some Heathens that believ'd it not, that their cost was vain which with a Ridiculous profusenes they laid out upon their Dead, because they had no hopes they should again Live. Alas! If we thought these poor Remains were never to be us'd more, it were

were more Reasonable we left them with more neglect. But since we know they shall be call'd for by the Trump of God, and hope they will become Vessels of Immortal Honour, 'tis now Piety and Duty in us to lay them decently and safely up, and our Faith concerning their Resurrection is a solid Argument to justifie our doing so. And if any *Judas*, upon observing the Pomp of this Solemnity, should ask to what purpose is this waste? Our Saviour's answer will be our best reply, That what is done is done for the Burial, and as a Pious Testimony of our Faith, that the Dead Body shall arise.

Upon the supposition of which, I proceed,

II. *Lastly*, To shew for what singular Reasons the last end of the Righteous is incomparably most desireable; so that it will be our Wisdom, not only to wish it may be our own, but in the mean time seriously to endeavour it may be so.

Precious, says the *Psalmist*, *Ps. 116. 15. in the sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints*; and in all Senses of the Words (they having more Interpretations than one) 'tis true that good Men are very dear to God; and with a peculiar distinction from the wicked and profane, 'tis evident at the Death of both.

1. Death to the Righteous comes stript of all its
Spiritual

Spiritual Horrors. Tho' it may assault his fleshly Nature with Swoons and Agonies, every step it advances, yet the Tranquility of his mind is still the same, and the consolations of his Spirit do often appear Superior in the conflict, tho' the anguish of the Body be never so extream.

But turn now your eyes upon a poor Creature that has been brought up delicately, and by the uninterrupted enjoyment of sensual pleasures, has rockt his conscience 'till this moment dead asleep; when the Harbingers of Death of a sudden draw back the curtains, and she awakes, with what distraction does it view it self! But then to look upwards, and behold his God, whom he wish'd an Idol, appearing in all the terrible Array of an Omnipotent Avenger, when the amaz'd wretch that would never believe it was a God that dyed to save him, begins to apprehend himself was the Murderer that spilt his Blood; we need not wonder at the fright. He is in upon such a prospect; and sure he can tell you, there is a vast difference, in the last end, between the Righteous and the Wicked. For,

2. When the Righteous dye there is a full end of all their Troubles: Death is their last Enemy, and he disarmed, that he can sting no more. But to wicked and Impenitent Sinners, except the Truth of God can fail for ever, this Death will begin their endless miseries. The present Life is to the most faithful Servants of Christ, for the most part, a state of hardship, for 'tis a perpetual warfare. They have innumerable Enemies, and these for the most part in ambuscade: The snares that are laid for them, often give them falls, and then the Bruise is long a Curing, and the Operation of the Medicine painful and afflictive. And St. Cyprian makes such a moving description of this matter, that

he wonders how any pious Soul can forbear longing for Death, or refrain running into Martyrdom. And St. Jerome, in an Epistle to the *Roman Lady Paulina*, comforting her for the Death of her Daughter, tells her, this World is only a troubled Sea ; yea tho' it were never so calm, yet the breadth and length of the Waters on which we float here is frightful, so that, *Solus exitus est securitatis portus*, we must quit the Stage, if ever we would be free from the Apprehensions of the Tragedy.

Accordingly Death does certainly put a Period to all these Troubles, and more, it translates all good Men to such a state of pure unmixed Joys, where there are no sorrows to embitter, no melancholy to Eclipse, nor any Temptation can come, to molest them in, or deceive them of their Joys. And,

3. *Lastly*, There is no comparison between the end of these two sorts of Men, in another Respect still, viz. of that honourable memory that is preserved after Death of the *one*, whilst Stench, not Perfume, gives the *other* a Remembrance ; who would immediately be forgotten, were it not for what is registered to their Infamy and disgrace.

Whereas a good Man's Character, like a true Medal, acquires value and veneration by its Age. His name has the Influence of a Law, upon those that come after him, and his Example is a Rule, which all Wise Men will obey and imitate. Yea those that will not do so, will yet pay a deference to it, and wish they could ; and I believe there are few in the world, as corrupt as 'tis, but will own, when they are in earnest, that they had rather be *Job* upon the Dunghill than *Alexander* the Great.

So that if we consider the confidence, wherewith Holy Men are encouraged to expect Death, or the Alacrity

crity wherewith they undergo it, or the Happiness they are let into by passing through it, or the Honour and Veneration wherewith their names are embalm'd after it, we see sufficient reason to justifie *Balaam's* wish; and to prompt us to the utmost endeavour, in preparing to *dye the death of the Righteous, and that our last end be like his.*

And now what if I should say, that what was this wicked Man's fruitless wish, was this excellent Lady's Wisdom providently to secure.

I know, and therefore dare appeal to all that knew her, that She was very early so wise as seriously to consider her latter end; following his Example, who was her great Master, to Instruct her in the Art of Devotion; and as he did, so did She carry her Soul continually in her hand, as well to observe its Dangers, as to be in constant readiness to resign it; for I scarce ever remember to have convers'd with her, but first or last She made that Subject part of the entertainment. And sure, what was so frequently her grave discourse, could not be seldom her Solemn Meditation. And I have been told, by such as had the most opportunities to observe her, That, as early as She could understand or learn any thing, She shew'd an Inclination to covet the knowledge of the best things.

The care of her Parents in her Virtuous Education, She so ingeniously requited, by such an uniform and Dutiful observance of them from her Childhood to her Marriage, that I heard her once very seriously justified by one of them, in these express words; That thro' her whole Life-time She had scarce done any thing to offend them. And from so steady a Piety shewn to her Earthly Parents, She made her Assent easie to that

elevated Devotion, wherewith She discharged her Duty to her Father which is in Heaven.

Those Books, which some People make all their Study, She would never be tempted to make her Recreation. Her taste was adapted only to solid Truth, She had no relish of Romantic Vanity.

She had the Felicity of a severe Temper, that could not be pleased with any discourse that in the least threatened to taint her imagination, or stain the purity of her mind. Instructive Histories She chose for her Diversion; but her studious Application nothing could command, but such Books as darted in Light upon her mind to discover her Duty, and Heat to enflame her with Zeal to practise it. And for this purpose She very early began to use the best Arts of conversing with God, and her own Soul: In the Splendours of a Court (for such was her Fathers House) She one day in the week constantly spent in the Retirements of her Closet; and in Conformity to the Discipline of the Church, her stated day was either *Wednesday* or *Friday*, which of them She foresaw She might be best permitted to make her own, and observe Christ's direction, in fasting at a time when she should least appear unto men to fast.

This account was given me by a Reverend Person, that had the Honour and pleasure to Minister to the Family in the Offices of Religion; and with this surprizing Remark upon this noble Saint, that he always observed her on those days, after she had finish'd the holy Labours of them, she was ever more cheerful in Humour, brighter and more agreeable in her conversation and Air, than She was used to be at any other time. Which shew'd, that as she took great care not to play the Hypocrite with the World, so She took true pains

pains, not to deal deceitfully with her Soul: For 'tis very observable, that these corporal severities often operate to quite contrary effects; and where they are overtly or insincerely managed, they only exasperate and enrage our Lusts, not kill them, and a whole days humiliation only serves to make the mistaken Votary more frētful, and peevish, prouder, and more censorious, *i. e.* worse disposed for Conversation, either with God or Man, than he was before.

But to dedicate a day to Fasting and Prayer, and holy Meditation; and afterward come forth with a serene Aspect, a cheerful Countenance, and an humble, condescensive, and obliging behaviour, this shews that one has got the Mastery over those Appetites, whose Chastisement he undertook, and the Beast is tam'd and made obedient by our discipline.

Thus did this young *Ascetic* so very early attain to what St *Paul* called *a Keeping under the Body*, which could not have been done at that Age, but by such a measure of Divine Grace, as in all likelihood would have been and was sufficient for her in her strongest Temptations.

Besides this, She was accustom'd at those years to that which prov'd of Infinite use to her, to the Advancement of her progress in the business of Religion. And that was to rise early, daily: When the first thing She did, was devoutly to acknowledge the mercy of God, who had watch'd over her whilst She had slept: Thus seasoning her mind betimes in the Morning, She seemed to have a grateful favour of it all the Day after; and when it could be, without Observation, She diverted to her Closet at Noon, that no distinct Period of her time might escape

escape her Consecration of her self and it to Gods Honour and Glory.

She was moreover extreamly laborious in her preparations for the Lords Supper, which She would never neglect, unless when She thought She had not due and timely Notice of the Day of its Ministration. The Hunger and Thirst She had after this heavenly Food, was always more Eager than her Appetite to her Meals. She felt this quick and Importunate in her, even in her last Convulsions, when to every thing else her desire fail'd. And in the extremity of that Weakness She was in, so near her Dissolution, her Devotion recover'd its wonted Vigour, and her Spirit appear'd able to actuate her Body, under the very Arrests of Death, to bear its share of Reverence and Worship in that Occasion.

She had an exemplary Charity, and not less so for its Discretion than its Liberality. She hated a Fragment should be lost, as She once thought nothing could be which the Poor had ; tho' at length She was perswaded there was a giving which was not Charity, after which She govern'd her Charity, as She did her whole Behaviour, with great Prudence. In a word, I have too good warrant to be afraid to say almost any thing of this great Subject, that might Reflect an Honour upon her Memory, who was so Rare an Example of almost every Thing praise worthy.

To forward her growth in these Attainments, She was not a little obliged to the Gifts of Nature, tho' much more to the Divine Grace ; as we are allowed to distinguish, tho' 'tis all of Grace. She had a high Birth, which by being dignified by a holy Calling, gave Her vast Advantages of Commanding and Improving her own Time, and set Her above the necessity,

sity, or the Temptation of wasting it upon impertinent Visits. Her bodily Structure was Beautiful and Exact, which being suitably informed and animated by a Devout Soul, added to her the further Ornament of a most chaste Conversation. And by all these together she deservedly challeng'd the heighth of *Solomon's* Character, for as her Lord was her Head, so She was his Crown.

Her Aversions were strong to whatever was shameful or dishonourable, either in principles or practice. And I have observ'd her, to express a peculiar dislike to that mean, but prevailing Custom, of serving up to the present Company, the faults or follies of the absent. In short, She esteemed that the best Breeding, which came nearest the Rule and Example of her Saviour ; and when all is done, Religion forms us to the best manners in the World.

And this was it which made this Lady some times take such State upon Her, as to give occasion for a mistake in judging of the courtesie and humility of her Temper, which Religion had made natural to her. For She would never put up an Affront offer'd to God or Religion, without shewing her Resentments, which could not but gain her such an inward Esteem, among all People of Worth or Honour, as more than compensated for what She lost of outward Complement and Respect, from some other Persons. And now to describe her Deportment under her bodily Afflictions, of which She had a great share, is a task too hard for any one that wants those Tryals, and that measure of Patience, and pious Resignation wherewith She bore them. This is certain ; By these fatherly Disciplines She was trained up, and admirably accomplish'd for the discharge of her Duty in all those Stations

Stations and Relations the Divine Providence had appointed her to sustain. And I truly believe She did so.

That her Parents have absolv'd her, I have already said; That her Lord has too, since her conjugal State, I am able to testifie in such a manner, that 'tis not fit to be Reported, 'till He is himself removed above the Eccho of it. And I am sure no Man can do justice to his noble Character, with respect to his Behaviour towards his Dear Lady, but he must distaste his Modesty, and make his Complement an Offence.

To her Servants and Dependants She was a Nursing Mother; to her Acquaintance an obliging Friend; and to all her Relatives and Allies, She even exceeded in Tenderness and Affection. So that She having with such almost unexampl'd Arts of Piety and Solicitude acquitted her self to her Parents, with all filial Obedience; to her dear and sure now most disconsolate Lord with all Ingenuous conjugal Affection; and REGARD to all the World with untainted Honour; and to her God and Saviour with a pure Conscience, She is gone, where her warfare is at an end, and where her Triumphs are begun, that are never to have an end. *To which God of his Infinite mercy, &c.*

FINIS.